

Africa SPECIAL REPORT

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Egypt War Points Up African Problems

MIDDLE EAST OIL and the Suez Canal do not tell the whole story of why Britain and France went to war in Egypt. Considerations in Africa, virtually overlooked in current press accounts, help round out the picture, help explain why President Nasser was regarded as such a threat to the British and French positions.

These African considerations, noted below, may shed additional light on why Anglo-French fears were strong enough to prompt the ill-fated British-French "armed attack against Egypt" (as President Eisenhower described it) aimed at Nasser's destruction.

a) France, whose assistance and encouragement of Israel before the invasion had the most disturbing implications, had come to blame Nasser for France's inability to find a solution in North Africa--much in the same way Russia blames "Western provocation" for her troubles in Hungary. Only days before the Egyptian war temporarily took the heat off in North Africa, France's position had reached a desperate new low. Her arrest of the five Algerian rebel leaders was regarded as a personal affront to the moderate leaders of Morocco and Tunisia on whom France had been counting, and the French situation in North Africa, worsened by Nasser's encouragement to the Arabs, was assuming the proportions of a major debacle.

b) Cairo radio's propagandistic Voice of Arabia had come to be regarded in British and French circles, especially since Egypt's July seizure of the Suez Canal, not as a nuisance, but as a menace. Beaming deep into the African continent as well as the Arab lands along the Mediterranean, the radio proclaimed Egypt's intention of "working for the liberation of the African continent" and achieving a linkage of Africans and Arabs in the fight against imperialism. Cairo radio's

efforts to stir up Arab populations in Somalia, Aden, Kenya, and Zanzibar became a source of major British concern. To Kenya's Africans, Cairo once addressed itself thusly:

"The Mau Mau revolt...must be revived, not only in Kenya, but in the entire continent and must go on until Africa belongs to the Africans."

On November 2, during the first stages of attack, R.A.F. light bombers sought out the Egyptian transmitters in the desert near Cairo and silenced the Voice of Arabia with 500-pound bombs.

c) Some European observers have seen danger, from their point of view, in the huge advances of Islam throughout much of Africa. In March of this year, a Catholic



Cairo Radio disturbed British and French
--London Daily Mail cartoon.

publication said the number of Moslems in Africa has increased by 32 million since 1934, and intimated that the Islamic "conquest" of Africa had its roots in el-Asher theological seminary in Cairo.

d) Egypt has made no secret of her hopes of assuming psychological leadership in the liberation of Africa from colonialism. Far more ominous, in the eyes of some observers, is the appalling possibility of Egypt serving, however unwillingly, as a spearhead for penetration of Africa by the Soviet Union.

► The New York Times published in May 1956 a "highly authoritative statement" from London to the effect that Russia was making initial moves in a "concerted plan to follow up the Soviet thrust in the Middle East and to penetrate South, using Egypt as a bridge to establish contact with Communist networks in French North Africa as a preliminary to the main objective."

The "main objective" is described as achieving political and commercial dominance in Africa. Russia is said to be training young Africans in Prague and elsewhere in techniques of infiltration, propaganda and guerrilla warfare. Communist diplomats appear in Africa in increasing numbers. Moscow universities have reportedly been ordered to beef up study programs concentrating on racially explosive central and southern Africa, areas which, because of their mineral wealth, are of incalculable strategic and economic importance, not only to Europe but to America.

Russia was given a free ride on Cairo Radio. Some diplomats fear her spectacular arms deals with Nasser could give the Kremlin a big hold on the Egyptian economy. Already Cairo may have become a clearing house for Communist arms to other parts of the continent. Russian intentions vis-a-vis Egypt and Africa may be one reason the West feared she meant business this month when she threatened to come forcefully to Egypt's aid.

► THE NEW GLOBAL SITUATION arising in the last weeks of 1956 intensifies for American diplomats the awful challenge posed by awakenings in Africa. Anti-colonialism and hatred of the white man, whether it emanates from the grass roots of the Rhodesian veld, or is fanned from Cairo, Moscow, New Delhi, must at the very least hasten the day of reckoning in vital areas of Africa.

These questions have not yet been answered:

Has the British-French attack, by its failure to achieve its objectives, so damaged the prestige of two powers that this day has not been forestalled but closed? Have Britain and France been discredited to a dangerous extent in the eyes of the African? If so, does this leave to the United States the choice of carrying the ball for the West or forfeiting the game in Africa?

► RUSSIA MAY HAVE LITTLE HOPE of turning large numbers of Africans into Communists. More disconcerting, however, is her potential for accelerating the pace of revolutions, pointing them in violently anti-western directions, neutralizing emerging Governments. The American approach of helping new countries as they emerge does not tackle developing crises in the continent's real trouble spots, which are those places in Africa where, under existing political structures, the indigenous majority may feel there is little hope now or in the foreseeable future to determine its own destiny except through violent means. In this cate-

gory might be listed Algeria, South Africa, Portugal, Africa, possibly Kenya, possibly (if its goal of "partnership" fails) the Central African Federation. In several of these areas, the potential for intelligent American influence, perhaps even in concert with enlightened European powers, is significant but unexploited.

American paralysis on the colonial issue has stemmed in part from a prevailing respect for the colonial policies of London, Paris and Brussels and an evident feeling that the troubles do not lie so much with these metropoles but with dominant white groups in Africa.

► Americans can be sorted into at least three groups in their attitude toward Africa:

1. Those who still feel that Africans are primitive, culturally inferior people and that there are no real problems except in finding ways to shut up a few fanatic leaders. This is an old European propaganda theme and still appeals to tourists, but not exclusively to tourists.

2. Those who feel there are problems, but feel interference would only make things worse. In this view, to bid openly against Cairo and Moscow for popularity among frustrated Africans would only intensify agitation, cause white groups to toughen their stance. If any effort is called for, it should, it is felt, take the form of patient, behind-the-scenes persuasion.

3. Those who feel there are grave problems, and that something ought to be done before it is too late. Holders of this view put more weight on the inexorable upsurge of African nationalism and resentment of white exploitation and stress the need for an approach which is essentially American. They feel dominant whites are simply raising the banner of status quo on their frightened backward march into bloodshed and oblivion and the sooner America can politely--or impolitely--extricate herself from their camp the better. Otherwise, it is felt, American losses in Africa could prove catastrophic.

Conditioning all of these views is a generally unspoken--and unproven--fear that a divorce of Europe from her colonies would make European economic strength appallingly dependent on American charity.

► AS A RESULT of the Egyptian fiasco, faint rumblings of a new American approach are being heard.

After the attack (and before the election), Vice President Nixon, on behalf of the President, told a Hershey, Pennsylvania, audience that "for the first time in history we have shown independence of Anglo-French policies toward Asia and Africa which seemed to us to reflect the colonial tradition."

Two days later, on November 4, the President's aide, Sherman Adams, told a national audience on the radio-TV show "Meet the Press" that the United States can do in the world today what she may never have had the chance to do since the Declaration of Independence "to commence to get these people (nations of Africa and Asia) to understand that they have their right in the sun and it isn't power politics that the West is playing. This is a mission of freedom, freedom with justice in the world, and that is the basic foundation of the American policy."

It is too soon to tell whether these statements represent the beginnings of a considered new approach to the agonizing problems of Africa. In Washington, Africa is just now being discovered.

news briefs

• INTEREST IN AFRICA among American Catholics was given emphatic focus this month with the announcement that an Institute of African Affairs is being established at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. Director of the Institute is Rev. Francis M. Philben, a native of Boston, Massachusetts who has served six years in African mission work. Father Philben plans to start some African courses in the fall of 1957 and hopes to develop a full graduate African Studies Program within three or four years. Announcement of the Institute was made November 9 at a reception in Washington, D.C. at the residence of the Holy Ghost Fathers, who operate Duquesne University. The Order is particularly dedicated to Negro salvation and has been active in Africa since 1840.



FATHER PHILBEN

In a message from the Vatican, Pope Pius XII conferred his Apostolic Blessing on the new Institute and expressed his confidence that it would be a source of many benefits to the peoples of Africa and all who strive to assist them materially, morally and spiritually.

Duquesne's Director of Development, Dr. Thomas P. Melady, sounded a call to American Catholics only a few months ago to take the initiative in warding off the advances of Communism in Africa by "exerting all energies to ensure that the Africa of tomorrow is a Christian Africa."

Purpose of the new Institute is to stimulate serious thinking on African affairs and to provide trained personnel for government and industry. The Institute eventually hopes to offer graduate African courses ranging from sociology to politics, publish learned journals, sponsor African conferences, provide some courses for undergraduates, conduct a student--and teacher--exchange program between America and Africa, arrange student tours of Africa and provide a speakers bureau of African experts.

• SENATOR THEODORE FRANCIS GREEN (D-R.I.), 89-year-old longevity champ of the U.S. Senate, is back from Africa after a six-week tour through 13 countries. He found an "astonishing awakening" on the continent, singled out South Africa as the most likely future trouble spot. He found African peoples "largely illiterate but very intelligent", eager to learn and "open to new ideas." He reported no "widespread" Communist influence, but felt it might well follow any U.S. failures to help African nations develop.

• FRENCH TOGOLAND late last month voted heavily in favor of a new constitution making the West African territory an "autonomous republic" within the French Union. Out of a registered electorate of 437,000, some 77 per cent voted to accept a "new status for Togoland and end to Trusteeship Regime", rather than "continuation of the Trusteeship Regime." Abstentions, amounting to about 22 per cent, were encouraged by opposition groups who regarded the referendum as a French move to get the territory out from U.N. Trusteeship control and short-circuit independence. The vote is expected to become an issue shortly in the U.N. General Assembly.

• 72-YEAR-OLD Sir Godfrey Huggins, one of the most celebrated figures in all central Africa, put down the mantle of leadership in the Central African Federation on October 31 after serving as a Prime Minister longer than anybody else in the history of the British Empire. Known since 1955 as Lord Malvern, the former surgeon was one of the builders of Southern Rhodesia and has led the new Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland through the first three years of its tortuous path to racial partnership. His successor is 49-year-old Sir Roy Welensky, 270-pound former prizefighter, labor leader and train engineer, who already faces a severe test of leadership in a developing clash between the Federation and Britain. Especially fearful of a Labor victory in England, white Rhodesians are stepping up their demands for an early granting of dominion status and removing of Colonial Office control. Britain wants to wait until she is sure Federation Africans will be given a fair deal in the new state.

AFRICA SOUTH, a new quarterly sponsored by white, Asian and African leadership opposed to the "official racist policy of the South African Government" and published in Cape Town made an October appearance on American newsstands. South African sponsors, Liberal and Labor party leaders and other opponents of Apartheid, hope the new publication will serve as the impetus for the first democratic coalition of all non-Communist South African forces dedicated to equal rights. Immediate indication of the publications potential impact were reports in the Johannesburg Sunday Express that the government may move to control "the outspoken comment of such liberally oriented publications as **AFRICA SOUTH**." U. S. representative is Gilbert Jonas, 8 West 40th Street, New York. Mail orders are being processed by S. Pauley, 320 West 87th Street, New York; single copies, 75¢, year's subscription, \$3.

THE LIBERIAN YEARBOOK 1956, compiled and edited by Henry B. Cole, can serve as a handbook to tourists or a text for those interested in the Republic of Liberia, her industry, laws, political system, press, schools and churches. The 312 page paper-backed book, including a Liberian "Who's Who," is available from the Liberian Embassy, Washington, \$2.

THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION'S Second National Conference on Exchange of Persons will meet in Chicago's Congress Hotel, December 5-7. John A. Noon, U. S. Information Agency Program and Policy Officer for Africa, will chair an Africa Workshop Panel made up of members well-known to the field: Ruth Sloan, Jane Alden, Laird Bell, Maurice Hennessy, Melville Herskovits and E. Jefferson Murphy.

WESTERN MICHIGAN COLLEGE in Kalamazoo marked its annual World Affairs Week with a conference on Africa Today, November 14-16. Douglas Williams, Colonial Attaché at the British Embassy, keynoted the program.

business notes

- **DECISION TO EXPLOIT** one of the world's largest manganese deposits, at Franceville in French Equatorial Africa, was reached last month by the firm "Comilog," 49 per cent of which is owned by United States Steel. The other 51 per cent is held by French interests.
- **COFFEE** has become the biggest export of Uganda, surpassing cotton last year for the first time. Relative values were: Coffee, \$56,000,000; cotton, \$46,000,000.
- **UNITED STATES IMPORTS** of cocoa beans from Africa ran about 250 million pounds in the first nine months of 1956, close to 25 per cent increase over the same period of 1955.
- **BLACKFAT TOBACCO**, an 80-year-old speciality crop grown only in Western Kentucky and Tennessee, was exported in its entirety of 5.3 million pounds to West Africa in 1955.
- **RHODESIAN TOBACCO EXPORTERS** are visiting both New Zealand, which imports its tobacco requirements almost exclusively from the United States, and Australia which imports about 25 per cent of her tobacco needs from Rhodesia.
- **SOUTH AFRICAN CITRUS** exports will run about 6½ million boxes this year, an increase of 250,000 boxes over last year. North African exports will total 15 million boxes, a 15 per cent increase over last year.
- **KENYA'S CAPITAL**, Nairobi, and major port, Mombasa, each need a new 500-room hotel. British East Africa officials promise American builders to fill 100 rooms at Nairobi nightly with airline personnel alone.
- **CENTRAL AFRICA** is a growing market for consumer goods because the economy is turning from barter to cash, with higher wages for civil servants and others, L.C. Ameye of the Banque Belge D'Afrique recently told the Export Managers Club of New York.
- **CENTRAL AFRICAN** Federation has removed import restrictions on motortrucks with built-in tipping devices and self-propelled cranes made in dollar and nondollar lands.
- A TRANS-AFRICAN OIL PIPELINE running 20,000 miles from Milindani on the South Tanganyika coast to Walvis Bay in Southwest Africa has been proposed following the Suez crisis. Maj. C.T.C. Taylor, president of the Rhodesian Federation of Regional Development, said his plan would cost \$550 million.
- **NIGERIA'S PEANUT EXPORTS** in 1956 will be close to 475,000 tons while 110,000 tons will go to local oil mills. Most of the oil also will be exported, mainly to United Kingdom.

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